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TAGS: [EFIN](#) [KU](#) [KTFN](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)

SUBJECT: TERRORISM FINANCE: GOK CONDEMNS USG DECISION TO
DESIGNATE KUWAIT-BASED RIHS

REF: A. KUWAIT 677

[1](#)B. KUWAIT 700

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary and comment: Both liberal and conservative newspapers and politicians have been outspoken in criticizing the USG's action to designate the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS). (See Refs A and B for Kuwait media reaction to RIHS designation.) The GOK Council of Ministers on June 17 weighed in with a statement condemning the action and claiming that the designation was based on "false evidence." Press statements by GOK Ministers and public grandstanding by members of the National Assembly almost unanimously assert that there is no reason for concern with any of RIHS' activities or GOK charitable safeguards. The GOK, in short, has staked out a hard public position that may prove difficult to retract or modify. Post will provide, septel, further analysis on possible next steps. End summary and comment.

[1](#)2. (U) The Kuwaiti Council of Ministers' statement, issued by Prime Minister Nasser al-Mohammad al-Ahmad Al Sabah on June 17, states that "the Council of Ministers denies these false accusations that are not based on evidence." He added that "the State of Kuwait rejects any action that undermines or casts doubt on its charity organizations and its positive role in serving the Kuwait, Islamic, and human society." The Cabinet also reiterated its trust and confidence in RIHS and Kuwait's other charitable organizations, praising their efforts in "the fight against terrorism and its destructive activities." Additional statements by GOK officials in the Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Social and Labor Affairs, and National Security Bureau among others and MPs from all factions have rallied around RIHS and largely failed to address any potential wrongdoing by the charity. One week after the U.S. designation announcement, the volume of daily media attention to the RIHS issue has declined sharply.

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